

HEXTRACTION

Tediously Comprehensive Rules

Version: Rules Update 1 (this document updated 2025-03-08)

Section 0: Meta Rules

0.0: The Meta-Golden Meta-Rule

Hextraction is a silly game and should not be taken seriously.

0.1: Effect Prohibitions

No tile can:

1. Prevent a player from leaving the game, or prevent a player who's lost the game from reclaiming their stuff
2. Assign any sort of consequence for doing or failing to do an out-of-game action, such as buying another player a drink, quacking like a duck, gambling their tiles, touching their nose, etc.
3. Refer to §0 or contradict any of its rules, **UNLESS** the effect is **Forbidden**
4. Damage, mar, or otherwise permanently damage any ball, board, or tile but itself
5. Be likely to injure a player
6. Require any player besides the tile's owner to provide any item except steel balls and other tiles
7. Add more tiles to the game
8. Return a destroyed tile to the game
9. Lock into the game board or otherwise complicate physically removing the tile
10. Prevent a player from drawing tiles when their turn ends
11. Cause a player to skip more than one consecutive turn, or prevent them from rolling and/or playing tiles for more than one consecutive turn

0.2: Tile Requirements

All tiles must:

1. Have arrows pointing to the subjects of all **Setup** instructions. The word '**Setup**' is also required, unless instructions are printed on the tile itself.
2. Be accompanied by a physical instruction card if the tile has **Setup** instructions, unless the instructions are on the tile itself
3. Have a star if the tile has an effect
4. Be accompanied by a physical rules card if the tile has an effect, unless the rules text is on the tile itself
5. Be able to bottom out in a standard Hextraction slot in at least one orientation
6. Be small and robust enough to shuffle fairly with other tiles

0.3: Setup and Rules Card Requirements

0.3.1: **Setup** and **Rules** cards must:

1. Have a clear picture of the corresponding tile
2. Have the tile's name
3. Have the **Setup** instructions and/or rules clearly written
4. Be a physical item - pictures or Web sites are NOT enough

0.3.2: **Setup** and **Rules** cards only apply to tiles owned by the same player.

0.3.3: Each player may only bring one **Setup** and/or **Rules** card per tile name.

0.4: Forbidden Effects

1. As a tile with a **Forbidden** effect is played, all players vote whether to enable the effect.
2. If any say nay, the effect is disabled.
3. Other non-**Forbidden** effects continue to apply.
4. A **Forbidden** tile is a tile with at least one **Forbidden** effect.
5. The **Forbidden** vote is called once per play. Multiple copies of the same tile, or the same tile played multiple times, all call separate votes.

0.5: Voting

1. At any point, a player can vote to destroy a tile. Until the vote is finished, no player can initiate any action except leaving the game.
2. The player who proposed the vote casts the first yea or nay, followed by other players in turn order.
3. All players must be present, and all must vote yea or nay.
4. If the votes are tied, or nays outnumber yeas, destroy the tile.
5. Players should refrain from filibustering; repeatedly calling votes on the same issue, presenting overly long arguments, calling multiple votes on the same turn, etc., to the point it slows down the game.
6. If a tile is voted off the board, its effects immediately stop applying. Any of its effects waiting to resolve cease to exist.
7. If a tile is voted off while it's being played, the active player immediately draws a replacement tile and can play again.
8. If a tile is voted off while rolling, nullify ALL effects triggered during the roll. Rolling ball(s) can't win the game, destroy tiles, or activate effects. The active player then gets a reroll.

Section 1: Game Setup

1.0: Initiating Play

1. At least one player must contribute a game board.
2. If multiple players want to contribute game boards, figure it out. I suggest guessing how many subscribers Zack Freedman has without going over.
3. All players may contribute any number of balls. There should be at least three per player.
4. All players may contribute any number of tiles to the **Main Pool**. It must contain at least enough tiles to fill the board, plus three per player who did NOT contribute tiles.
5. All players may contribute any number of **Virtual** tiles to the **Virtual Pool**.
6. Each player who contributed tiles to the **Main Pool** picks three different tiles from their collection to be their opening hand.
7. Each player who didn't contribute tiles to the **Main Pool** draws three at random.
8. The **Main Pool** should be stored in a box or bag, so players can draw a random tile with their eyes closed.
9. Decide who goes first.

1.1: Balls

1. All balls must be 10mm or 3/8" in diameter.
2. All balls must be made of stainless steel and should be magnetic.
3. Because balls can't be easily marked, players should expect to lose a few during a game.

1.2: Hand

1. The front side of each tile in a player's hand is secret. Other players can't try to sneak a peek.
2. After a player ends their turn, that player draws back up to three tiles.
3. After a player ends their turn, they discard until they have three tiles.
4. A player may bring a rack or other contrivance to hold their hand. It must reveal at least part of the back or side of each tile. Otherwise, players who can't provide a tile holder will have an unfair disadvantage.
5. Drawing a tile must be done blindly.

Section 2: Gameplay

2.0: Actions

- 2.0.1: Whenever the game stabilizes, the active player must roll a ball, play a tile, activate an effect, or end the turn.
1. The active player cannot end the turn unless they've rolled as many balls as possible, played as many tiles as possible, and activated all mandatory effects.
- 2.0.2: Each player must roll one ball per turn. Nothing can reduce this below one.
- 2.0.3: Each player must play one tile per turn. Nothing can reduce this below one.
- 2.0.4: Unless otherwise specified, all activated effects are optional.
- 2.0.5: Actions may be taken in any order.

2.1: Rolling a Ball

- 2.1.1: To roll a ball, the active player picks up a ball, places it in an on-ramp, and releases it.
1. Flicking the ball down the ramp, or otherwise attempting to accelerate it beyond gravity, is not permitted.
 2. Any on-ramp can be selected. All slots on the top row should have on-ramps, but nothing stops the board creator - or even tile creators - from adding more.
 3. If the board has a non-standard ramp system, like a pinball shooter, you're on your own, buddy. I can't make rules for everything.
- 2.1.2: If tile effects prevent all ramps from being rolled on, ignore the fewest effects necessary to roll a ball.
- 2.1.3: If the ball fails to leave the ramp:
1. If possible, pick a different ramp leading to the same slot that doesn't already have a ball on it, and roll another ball on it.
 2. If not, destroy the tile in that slot.
- 2.1.4: Once the ball is released, and until the game stabilizes, that player is considered to be rolling.
1. Until the roll ends, all moving balls are considered to be rolled by the active player.
 2. Whenever all balls come to rest, the active player resolves all triggered effects, in any order.
 3. At any point, if any tile has been touched three or more times this roll, the active player may **Break the Loop**. This applies immediately, even if the game hasn't stabilized.
 4. If the game enters an infinite loop, in which no one can win or lose, and the game can't stabilize, the active player must immediately **Break the Loop**.
- 2.1.5: Once the game stabilizes:
1. If a ball fell through a slot and no effect returned it to the board, ignore it. If it's in an end-zone, remove it.
 2. If a ball entered an end-zone this roll, and it's still there, the rolling player wins!
 3. For each ball that left the board another way, destroy the last tile that ball touched.
 4. **Break the Loop** if any tile was touched three or more times during the roll.
 5. For each tile touching three or more balls: Destroy ANY tile ANY of those balls are touching.

2.2: Playing a Tile

- 2.2.1: To play a tile, the active player reveals a tile from their hand and selects enough open destination slots to fit it.
1. If the selected tile is a **Combo**, they instead select one open destination slot per sub-tile and **Virtual** counterpart.
 2. The player is now considered to be playing.
 3. While playing, no one can roll, play, or activate an effect.
- 2.2.2: If no tiles in a player's hand are legal to play:
1. If the board is full, the active player destroys the fewest number of tiles necessary to play a tile from their hand.
 2. If not, that player must reveal a **Limit** tile if possible. It gains "Overwrites anything" until played.
 3. If they can't, they ignore the fewest number of tile Effects necessary to play a tile from their hand.
- 2.2.3: The player can manipulate the tile's moving parts before or immediately after placing it on the board.
1. In other words, tiles with moving parts can be played with the parts in any orientation, unless they have **Setup** instructions.
 2. The player may follow the **Setup** instructions before or immediately after placing the tile in the slot.
 3. Moving parts cannot be manipulated after following **Setup** instructions.
 4. If the part has arrows pointing at moving parts, indicating **Setup** instructions, but no instructions are printed on the part, the owner must provide a rules card with the **Setup** instructions.
- 2.2.4: The active player places the selected tile(s) in the selected slot(s)
1. Tiles must bottom out.
 2. If the tile fails to bottom out, the player must lift it out and try again on the same slot in a different orientation.
 3. If no orientations work, destroy the tile, draw a tile, and try to play again.
- 2.2.5: After the tile is released, activate effects.
1. If the tile has an **On Play** effect, and/or playing it causes other effects to activate, the player first fully releases the tile, then decides what order to resolve them.
 2. The player is still considered to be playing until the last effect resolves.

2.3: Stability

1. If at any point a ball is moving, an effect is resolving, and/or an effect is waiting to resolve, the game is unstable.
2. While the game is unstable, players can't roll, play, activate effects, or end the turn unless instructed to do so by an effect.

2.4: Destroying and Discarding

1. To destroy a tile, remove it from the board and set it aside.
2. If it's a **Virtual** Tile, instead return it to the **Virtual Pool**.
3. If an installed tile falls out of its slot, destroy it.
4. Destroyed tiles are removed from the game and can never return. This meta-rule also appears in §0, and can't be overruled by non-Forbidden effects. Note that this rule DOES NOT apply to "instead" effects that change the tile's destination.
5. Destroying a tile causes its effects to immediately end, including any effects actively being resolved.
6. If the destroyed tile was a **Combo** sub-tile, also destroy enough other sub-tiles owned by the same player to reassemble the combo.
7. If an installed **Combo** sub-tile is discarded, also remove enough other sub-tiles owned by the same player to reassemble the combo, then return the reassembled tile to the pool.

2.5: Getting Tile Requirements

1. At any time, any player may request the rules for any tile on the board or in their hand with a star marking, unless that tile's rules are written on the tile itself.
2. The owner of the tile must immediately produce a physical rules card with a matching picture. The active player may ask the owner to read the rules aloud to all players, or may read them silently to themselves.
3. If the owner of the tile fails to get its rules in a reasonable time, and/or the rules card doesn't adequately identify the tile it corresponds to, and/or the requester can't physically read the rules, the requester may destroy the tile. If it was in their hand, they draw a tile.
4. Players are required to produce any items required to resolve the effects of tiles they own, with the exception of balls and other tiles.

2.6: Triggers

1. **Triggers** activate when touched by a ball.
2. **Trigger** areas must be clearly marked with textured or spiky walls, floors, and/or text.
3. The game does not stabilize, and the roll doesn't end, until all **Triggered** effects has resolved.
4. If the same roll activates multiple **Triggers**, the rolling player decides which order to resolve them.
5. If a **Triggered** effect refers to "balls in the trigger area," they check as the effect resolves. If those balls are no longer there, that part of the effect doesn't do anything.

2.7: Activated Effects

2.7.1: Players can use these effects at will.

2.7.2: These effects have a prompt and a colon : but lack a condition that would automatically fire the effect. Prompts can include Once per Turn;, Discard This;, etc.

2.7.3: If a prompt has a cost, like discarding a tile, the cost must be paid in full before beginning to activate the effect.

2.7.4: Unless the effect says otherwise:

1. Only the active player can activate effects.
2. The effect can be activated multiple times per turn.
3. Activated effects are optional.
4. If the effect is mandatory and the active player has rolled and played this turn, they must immediately activate the effect if able.
5. Effects can't be activated while anyone's playing, rolling, resolving an effect, or waiting for an effect to resolve.
6. Effects can be activated the turn the tile is played.
7. Effects can be activated after playing and rolling for your turn, before ending the turn.

2.8: Losing and Conceding

2.8.1: When the game stabilizes, a player loses the game if at least one of these conditions are true:

1. An effect has resolved that causes the player to lose the game.
2. The player has conceded.

2.8.2: Note that since the player doesn't lose until the game stabilizes, they can still call a vote to neutralize an effect that would cause them to lose.

1. This is sometimes, but not always, a jerk move.

2.8.3: When a player loses the game, they may reclaim their stuff:

1. If they own the board, they may declare the game a draw
2. They remove their tiles from the pool, board, and players' hands. Players immediately draw replacements for tiles reclaimed from their hand.
3. They remove enough balls from tiles to have the same number they brought in

2.8.4: Nothing can prevent a player who wants to leave from leaving.

1. Players are strongly encouraged to allow the game to end before reclaiming their stuff. This is a Chad move.

2.9: Winning the Game

2.9.1: When the game stabilizes, a player wins the game if at least one of these conditions are true:

1. A rolling ball has fully entered an End Zone this roll and is still there.
2. An effect has resolved that causes the player to win the game.
3. All other players have lost.

2.9.2: The game isn't over until it stabilizes, so players can still call a vote to neutralize an effect that would prevent the win.

1. This is a jerk move.

2.10: Stalemate

1. If a player attempts to draw a tile and the **Main Pool** is empty, the game ends in a draw.

2.11: Accidents

1. If a ball gets knocked loose, but no player is rolling, that ball has no effect on the game.
2. Leave accidentally rolled balls where they lie.

Section 3: Terms

Activated Effect: The active player can use these effects at will. See Section 2.7.

Break the Loop: Unsticks the game when the same tiles are being crossed repeatedly. To Break the Loop:

1. Simultaneously destroy every tile that was touched three or more times since the last time a roll began, even if the game hasn't stabilized.
2. Until the game stabilizes, nothing can cause a player to roll another ball or otherwise introduce a ball to a tile or ramp.

Combo: A tile keyword that represents a tile composed of smaller sub-tiles. All Combo tiles implicitly have the following effects:

1. After selecting this tile to play, break it apart into its sub-tiles and play them all simultaneously.
2. If the tile is also Virtual, as you play it, try to simultaneously Create all of its counterparts. Those tiles don't need to be owned by the same player.
3. If you can't Create part of a Virtual tile, return all parts you're trying to play to the Virtual Pool, draw, and play another tile.
4. If any part of a Combo leaves the board, whoever removed it also removes enough sub-tiles owned by the same player to reassemble the combo.
5. If a Virtual Combo tile leaves play, whoever removed it selects a copy of each of its counterparts to remove the same way. If a selected tile would enter a player's hand, instead return it to the Virtual Pool. Selected tiles don't need to be owned by the same player.

Create: Literally, "Search your hand or any pool for a given Virtual Tile. Unless this effect says otherwise, immediately play it."

1. Creating a tile activates its On Play effect after the Create effect has resolved.
2. Any player who introduces a Create effect to the game must contribute at least enough Virtual Tiles to resolve it at least once.

Destroy: Remove a tile from the game.

1. Destroyed tiles cannot re-enter the game by any means (see Section 0.1.10)
2. When a tile is destroyed, its effects end immediately.
3. When a Virtual tile is destroyed, return it to the Virtual Pool instead of removing it from the game. See Section 3.Virtual

Discard: Return a tile to the pool.

1. When a Virtual tile is discarded, return it to the Virtual Pool. See Section 3.Virtual.

Edge: A way to refer to a side of a slot. Edge 1 is the top, and numbering proceeds clockwise.

Hand: Tiles that a player can play during their turn. See Section 1.2.

Installed: A tile that's on the board.

Legal: A slot, ramp, etc that is eligible to be selected. For instance, if a tile has a Limit effect, the slots it prohibits are not legal.

Limit: An effect that restricts where or when a tile can be played.

Main Pool: The pool from which players draw and play tiles.

Notch: The next valid orientation in a given direction. If the tile only has one valid orientation, turning it one notch has no effect.

Offline: An effect that is only enabled if the board is not powered, or if a powered board is turned off.

1. Offline "updates" whenever the game stabilizes.

On Play: Effect that automatically activates after the tile is played, once the player's fingers are no longer touching it. Whoever played the tile makes all decisions for the effect.

Ongoing Effect: An effect that repeatedly, automatically activates or applies itself, but not due to a Trigger or being played.

Orientation: An angle that a tile can be played such that it bottoms out in its slot

Overdrive: An effect that is only active if every slot on the board is full.

1. Overdrive "updates" whenever the game stabilizes.

Overwrite: Play a tile "on top" of another tile.

1. To overwrite, select a tile and the minimum number of occupied slots required to play the tile. Destroy all tiles in the selected slot(s) and play the selected tile in the selected slot(s).

Playing: See Section 2.2. A player is considered to be playing if either:

- A. They are the active player, have declared that they want to install their tile for the turn, and the game has not stabilized.
- B. An effect requires them to install a tile but they have not yet done so.

Pool: A combined mix of tiles in a random pile.

1. Destroyed tiles are not included in a Pool.
2. The phrase 'the pool' refers to the Main Pool.
3. The phrase 'a pool' refers to the Main Pool or Virtual Pool.

Roll: To roll a ball, choose a ramp and release a 10mm steel bearing onto it. Otherwise inserting balls into the game, or setting them in motion, doesn't count as rolling. See Section 2.1.

Rolling: See Section 2.1. A player is considered to be rolling if either:

1. They are the active player and have released a ball onto a ramp, and the game has not stabilized.
2. An effect requires them to roll but they have not yet done so.

Setup Instructions: Text similar to effects that tells players how to prepare Mechanical Tiles. Examples include "Ball here," "Prime this," "Starts left," etc. See Section 2.2.

Stabilize: The game is unstable when a ball is moving, a tile is moving, or an effect is being resolved. See Section 0.5.

Tile Keyword: A keyword like Virtual, Unique, Combo, etc. that is tied to the tile itself, instead of an effect. Tile keywords are effects.

Touch: When a ball comes into contact with a tile, if:

- A. The ball was NOT in contact with the tile as the roll began.
- B. The ball WAS in contact with the tile as the roll began, and STOPPED contacting the tile during the roll.

Trigger: Effect that automatically activates when a rolling ball touches the trigger area. See Section 2.6.

1. Trigger areas must be delineated by jagged details.
2. A ball cannot fire a tile's trigger if it was touching the trigger area as the roll began, unless it left and re-entered the trigger area this roll.
3. If a triggered effect requires you to manipulate balls in the trigger area, it only affects balls that are still in the trigger area as you begin to resolve the effect.

Unique: A tile keyword that indicates that only a single instance of this tile should exist on the board at once. Note that tiles owned by other players with the same name may not be Unique. All Unique tiles implicitly have these effects:

1. Limit: This must overwrite a Unique tile of the same name if possible.
2. Discard this from your hand: Draw a tile. Activate only if a Unique tile of the same name is installed.

Virtual: A tile keyword indicating a tile intended to be Created by an effect. Virtual Tiles implicitly have the following effects:

1. This tile can, but doesn't need to, begin the game in the Virtual Pool.
2. When this tile is destroyed, return it to the Virtual Pool instead of removing it from the game. If it's also a Combo, destroy one copy of each of its counterparts. (It still counts as being destroyed.)
3. When this tile is discarded, return it to the Virtual Pool instead of the main pool. If it's also a Combo, discard one copy of each of its counterparts. (It still counts as being discarded.)
4. This tile can only leave the Virtual Pool by being Created. See Section 3.Create

Virtual Pool: A special "side pool" for Virtual tiles. See Section 3.Virtual

1. If a non-Virtual tile would enter the Virtual pool, it instead enters the Main Pool.
2. Tiles cannot leave the Virtual Pool by any means except Creating them. See Section 3.Virtual.